

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 580

November 16, 1995, 8:20 p.m.
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SECOND CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS (2nd Bill)/2nd Daschle Substitute

SUBJECT: Second Continuing Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1996 . . . H.J. Res. 122. Domenici motion to table the Daschle substitute amendment No. 3057.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 52-45

SYNOPSIS: As introduced, H.J. Res. 122, the Second Continuing Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1996 (the President vetoed an earlier second continuing appropriations bill; see vote No. 567), will provide limited funding through December 5, 1995 for Federal programs that have not yet had fiscal year (FY) 1996 appropriations enacted for them. The rate of appropriations will be the lowest of the current rate or the Senate- or House-passed rate. Programs and activities terminated or significantly reduced will be maintained at a rate not to exceed 60 percent of the current rate. Rates will be adjustable further to prevent reductions in force. Section 301 will commit the President and the Congress to achieving a unified balanced budget by 2002, as scored by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO).

The Daschle substitute amendment would extend the first continuing appropriations bill through December 22, 1995 and would require the President and the Congress to pass legislation to achieve a unified balanced budget by fiscal year 2002 (though it would not provide for scoring by the Congressional Budget Office). Further, that budget could not make cuts in Medicare or Medicaid to pay for tax reductions, nor could tax relief be given to Americans earning more than \$100,000 per year.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. Following debate, Senator Domenici moved to table the Daschle amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

The Daschle amendment pretends to concede on balancing the budget simply as a pretext to give us more of the same contemptible political grandstanding on Medicare, Medicaid, and tax relief that Democrats have been giving Republicans as a substitute for reasoned debate for this entire year, and particularly during the consideration of this particular measure. Every

(See other side)

YEAS (52)			NAYS (45)			NOT VOTING (2)	
Republicans (52 or 98%)	Democrats (0 or 0%)		Republicans (1 or 2%)	Democrats (44 or 100%)		Republicans (0)	Democrats (2)
Abraham	Helms		Specter	Akaka	Hollings		Moynihan- ²
Ascroft	Hutchison			Baucus	Inouye		Nunn- ²
Bennett	Inhofe			Biden	Johnston		
Bond	Jeffords			Bingaman	Kennedy		
Brown	Kassebaum			Boxer	Kerrey		
Burns	Kempthorne			Bradley	Kerry		
Campbell	Kyl			Breaux	Kohl		
Chafee	Lott			Bryan	Lautenberg		
Coats	Lugar			Bumpers	Leahy		
Cochran	Mack			Byrd	Levin		
Cohen	McCain			Conrad	Lieberman		
Coverdell	McConnell			Daschle	Mikulski		
Craig	Murkowski			Dodd	Moseley-Braun		
D'Amato	Nickles			Dorgan	Murray		
DeWine	Pressler			Exon	Pell		
Dole	Roth			Feingold	Pryor		
Domenici	Santorum			Feinstein	Reid		
Faircloth	Shelby			Ford	Robb		
Frist	Simpson			Glenn	Rockefeller		
Gorton	Smith			Graham	Sarbanes		
Gramm	Snowe			Harkin	Simon		
Grams	Stevens			Heflin	Wellstone		
Grassley	Thomas						
Gregg	Thompson						
Hatch	Thurmond						
Hatfield	Warner						

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

Democratic Senator is fully aware that the Daschle amendment's supposed acceptance of balancing the budget in 7 years is worthless, because no mention is made of whose numbers would be used. We remind them, for example, that President Clinton claimed that his little 21-page outline which he called a budget was in balance. We also remind them that the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), which President Clinton himself said should be the final and in fact only judge of whether a proposed budget is in balance, said that he fudged the numbers. The CBO said that this second, picture-book (7 of the 21 pages were charts) budget was out of balance by \$200 billion per year for all 7 years. Therefore, the Daschle amendment agrees to nothing.

It then goes on to say that whatever gimmick budget that is agreed to will not cut Medicare or Medicaid to pay for tax cuts, and that it will not contain tax cuts for anyone making more than \$100,000 per year. We have gone over these issues a thousand times, as have our colleagues. They are fully aware that the Republican plan will not cut Medicare to pay for tax cuts--every penny of savings will go back into the Medicare trust funds to increase their solvency. Nevertheless, our colleagues persist in making this statement because they think by scaring senior citizens they will win their votes. They know that in the end, if they win, they will destroy Medicare, but they do not seem to be a bit concerned over that little detail. They also know that the tax relief that will come from the fiscal dividend from balancing the budget will go almost entirely to middle-class, working families, yet they persist in talking about a nonexistent \$245 billion tax break for the "rich." Most of the tax relief will go to Americans earning less than \$75,000--our colleagues are being paid nearly twice that amount to stand on the Senate floor and say that those "rich" Americans do not deserve tax relief. The part our colleagues do not state when they talk about these "rich" Americans is that the main reason they do not want to give the fiscal dividend back to the American people is because they want to spend it. Over the course of this year, Republicans have had to beat back dozens of Democratic proposals to spend the fiscal dividend.

If Democrats do not like Republican priorities, they are welcome to enter the debate seriously at any time. Democrats do not mind standing on the sidelines and screaming, but they are too timid to enter the fray with serious negotiating proposals. We do not know why. They are certainly in a strong position--their President can always exercise a veto. If they really have alternative means of balancing the budget other than what we have proposed, we would love to discuss them and work out a compromise. How we reach a balanced budget is not nearly as important as actually reaching a balanced budget. We think a good starting point might be the balanced budget proposal which was offered by Senate Democrats and supported by 19 of them. That vote gave us a glimmer of hope that at least some Democrats are ready to be responsible.

By now, every Senator of both parties has to understand that entitlement spending must be controlled, and it must be controlled very soon, or our country will collapse economically. Even the "The Washington Post," which is a liberal newspaper that we do not often quote, realizes the damage that Democrats are doing to the Nation with their shameless performance of the past few weeks. We give our colleagues a few lines from today's Post editorial: "The deficit is largely driven in turn by the cost of the great entitlements that go not to small special classes of rich or poor but across the board to almost all Americans in time. The most important of these are the principal social insurance programs for the elderly, Social Security and Medicare. In fiscal terms, Medicare is currently the greatest threat and chief offender. Bill Clinton and the congressional Democrats were handed an unusual chance this year to deal constructively with the effect of Medicare on the deficit, and they blew it. The chance came in the form of the congressional Republican plan to balance the budget over 7 years. Some other aspects of that plan deserved to be resisted, but the Republican proposal to get at the deficit partly by confronting the cost of Medicare deserved support. The Democrats, led by the President, chose instead to present themselves as Medicare's great protectors. They have shamelessly used the issue, demagogued on it, because they think that's where the votes are . . . it gets more serious. If the Democrats play the Medicare card and win, they will have set back for years, for the worst of political reasons, the very cause of rational government in behalf of which they profess to be behaving."

We sympathize with those Democrats who truly are desirous of working out a compromise. They know that if they negotiate seriously with Republicans now, it will undercut their President who for some bizarre reason will not negotiate. He does not seem willing to consider any balanced budget plan, whether it has the support of congressional Democrats or not. If he does not change his position soon, some congressional Democrats are going to have to consider seriously whether they will work out a compromise without his support and then pass it over his veto. Hopefully it will not get to that point, but if it does, congressional Democrats are going to have to decide if they are going to put their party ahead of their country.

The Daschle amendment is a total waste of time. It offers absolutely nothing. Its only purpose is to allow Democrats to grandstand with the same bankrupt political arguments that they have been making all year. We will of course support the motion to table this amendment.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

The Daschle substitute amendment would first, provide funding through December 22, second, allow that funding to occur at the same level as it did in the last continuing appropriations bill, and third, would agree to enacting a plan to balance the budget in 7 years, so long as that plan did not cut Medicare or Medicaid to pay for tax cuts or to give tax cuts to wealthy Americans. We think this proposal is fair. If our colleagues insist on balancing the budget, we should insist that they do so without burdening the old and poor and helping the rich. We think this proposal is fair, and urge our colleagues to give it their support.

NOVEMBER 16, 1995

VOTE NO. 580
